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INDIAN
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EXPLORE



Focus: Extreme Architecture
understanding new tectonics



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A Designer's Abode

Sensitive in its approach, architect Babu Cherian's weekend home in Kozhikode, Kerala is envisaged as a place for the carefree mind and contemplative spirit.

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In the Realm of the Unknown

RAMA <Rover for Advanced Mission Applications>; a mobile research laboratory to explore Moon and Mars has been designed by LIQUIFER Systems Group, a multi-disciplinary design and development practice with offices in Mumbai and Vienna.

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ART**Scale, Element, Time – A Canvas**

A composition of scale, mass and creativity, the Leviathan by Anish Kapoor elevates a sense of discover and awe for the visitor.



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BOOK REVIEW**Architecture in India Since 1990**

Illustrative and with a contemplative narrative, Architecture in India Since 1990 by Rahul Mehrotra succeeds in bringing order to a confusing and chaotic architectural tapestry..

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DELHI DIALOGUES**DESIGN4BETTERCITY**

In the column curated by arch i, the fourth installment in this series is a compilation of short pieces by authors associated with DELHI 2050, from various design disciplines, discussing how they can help in shaping cities.

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SPACE FRAMES**Coloured**

Vivek Vilasini presents a satirical statement on the contagious and unique suburban phenomena in Kerala in this column curated by Dr. Deepak J. Mathew.

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Courtesy: Anish Kapoor and the Artist

THE BLUE PRINT AUG'11



Image of the Junta De Castilla office building with the Zamora Cathedral in the background.

Light & Logic

Miesian discipline of order and formal articulation converges with fluidity of light in the Junta De Castilla Y Leon building in Zamora designed by Alberto Campo Baeza.

Text: Ruturaj Parikh

Photographs, drawings and sketches: courtesy Estudio Campo Baeza



Sketch showing an intimate space between the facade and the wall.



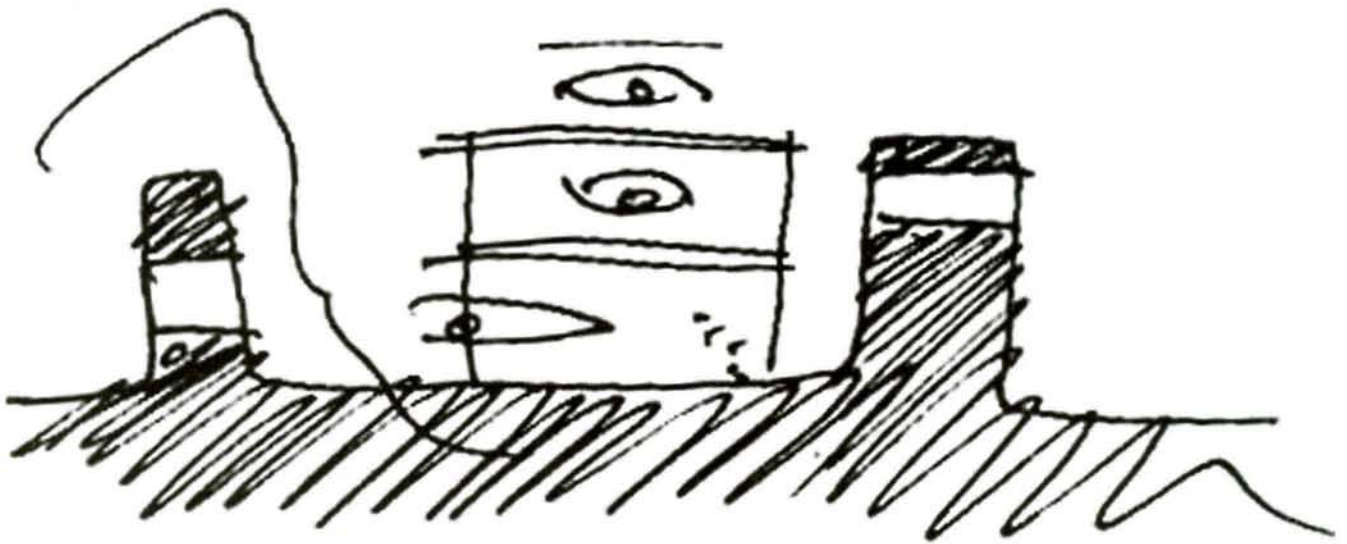
The historic city of Zamora.

Over the period of his working career, a lot of critics preoccupied with categorisation have called his architecture minimal. The lucid formal articulations of the Junta De Castilla office building propose an alternative understanding of Alberto Baeza's work. The architecture of Alberto Campo Baeza develops from an art of elimination; elimination of everything sans essential. Once, the unnecessary is dealt with, the enigmatic takes charge. In a historic neighbourhood of Zamora in Spain, a crystalline box is encompassed within a stone box to create an intimate, private and secret space of the Junta De Castilla office as an intuitive response to the building's natural, historical and built surrounding.

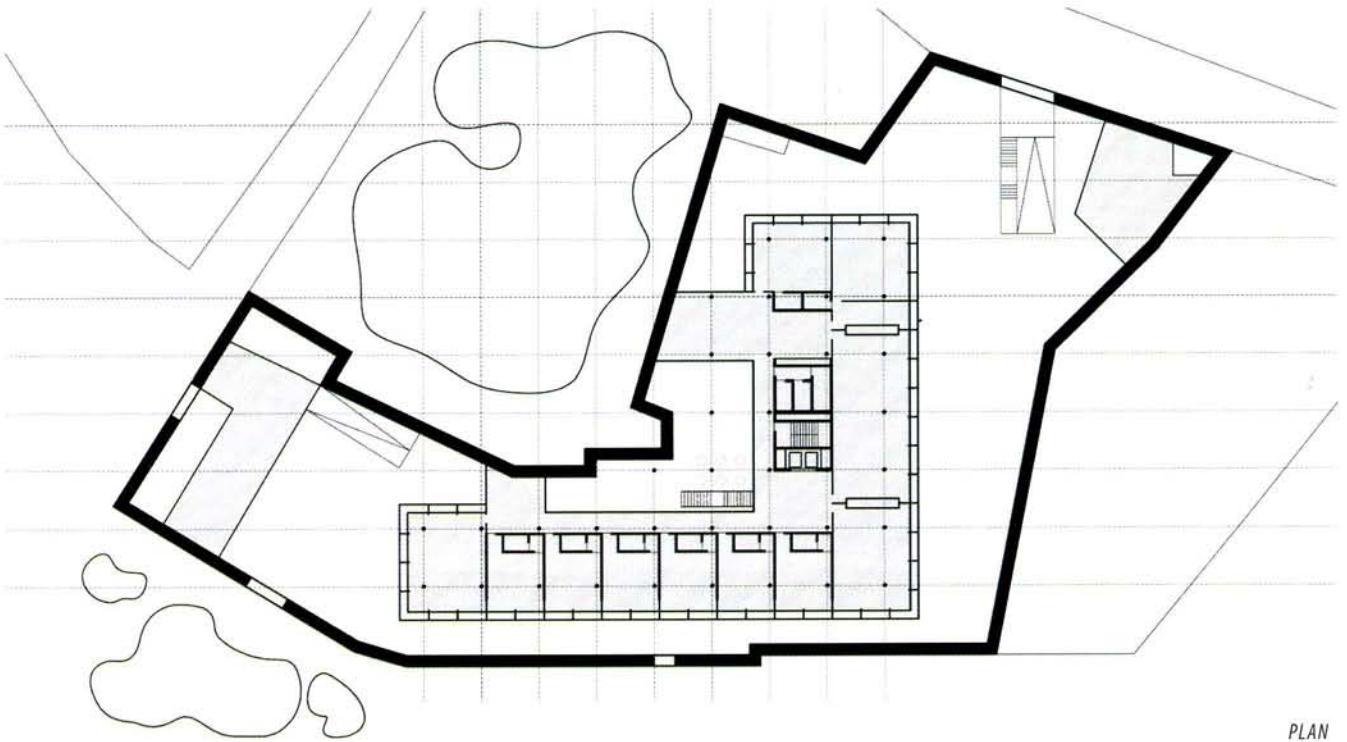
Alberto Campo Baeza's architecture departs from the absolute order and geometric discipline of the cube to work with forces of structure and gravity creating, in the process, forms and spaces that stand in perfect harmony with and against the forces of nature they control. On this historic site in Zamora, the peripheral walls of the site are raised high creating a private garden within. These walls composed of the same stone that forms the Zamora Cathedral are made visually heavy to represent the strength and robust quality of the stone. Within these heavy stone walls, a fragrant private garden is conceived creating a buffer between the outside and the inside. The space between the external stone wall and the glass of the built form within acts as a transition. Studies through physical models and three-dimensional views determine minor and



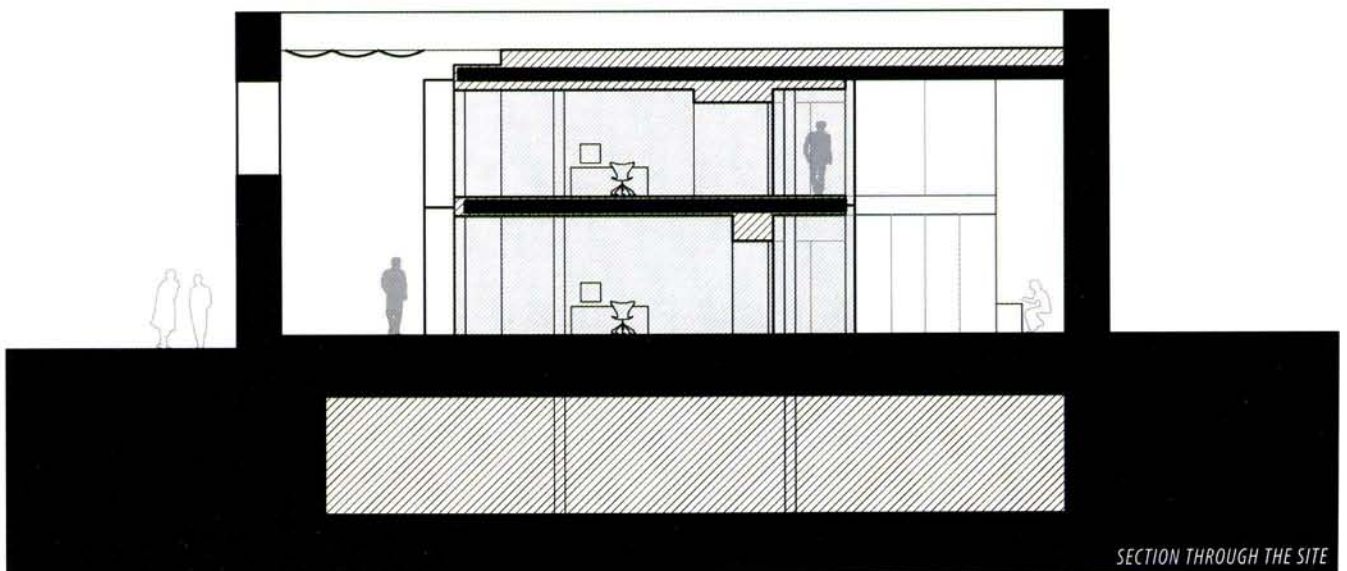
A model showing the Junta Castilla office (in white) within its context.



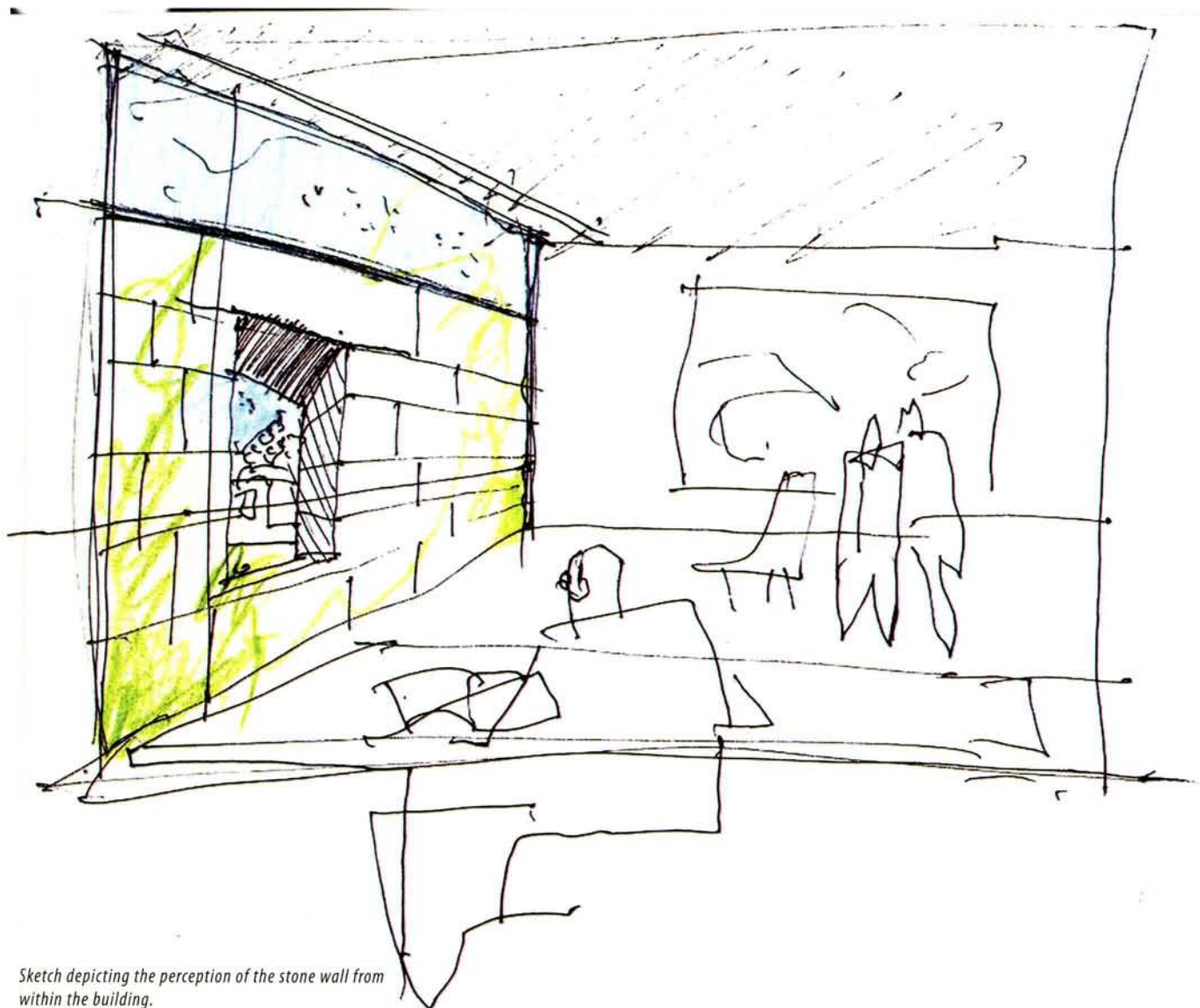
Idea of a transparent box within a stone wall with visual connections to the outside.



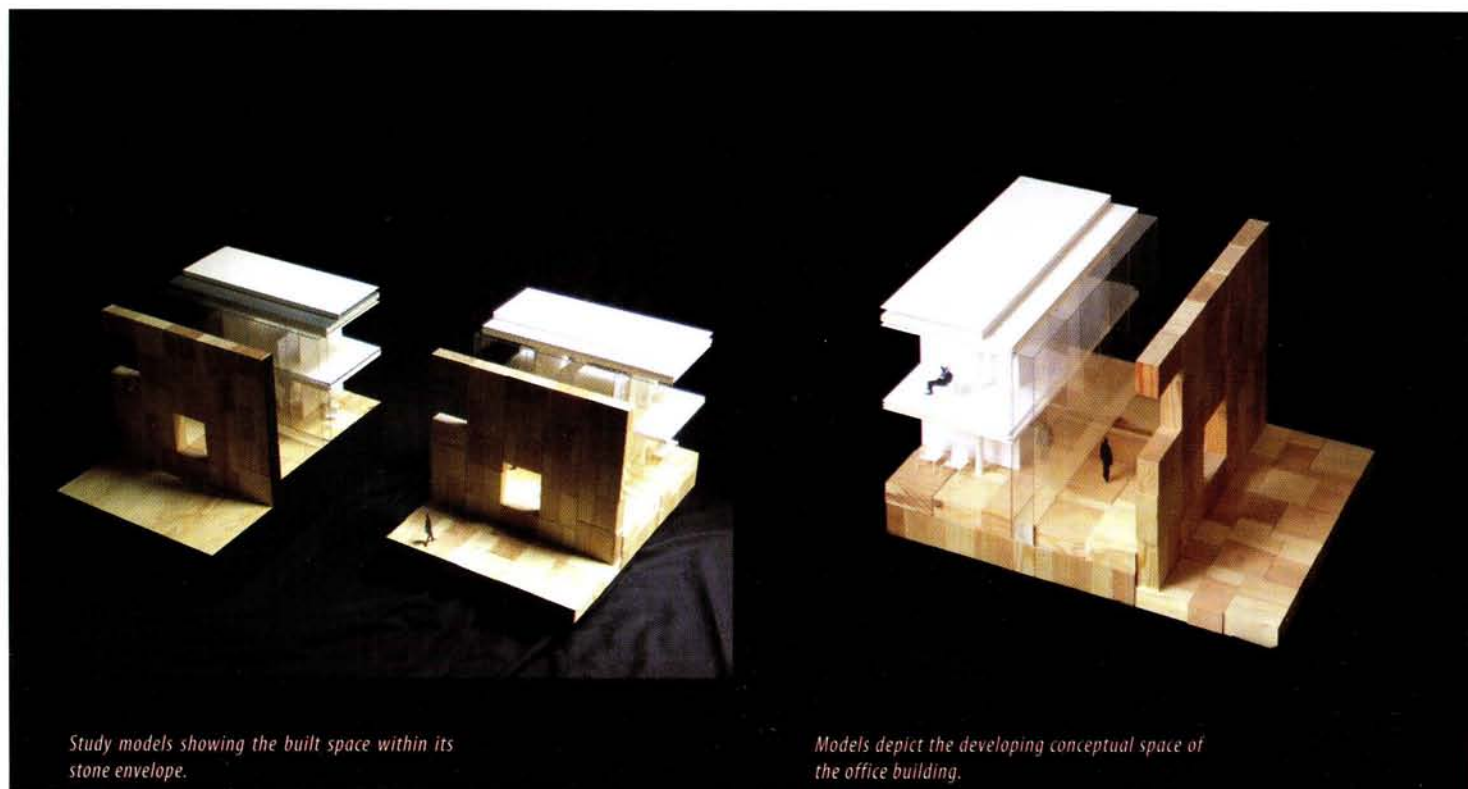
PLAN



SECTION THROUGH THE SITE



Sketch depicting the perception of the stone wall from within the building.

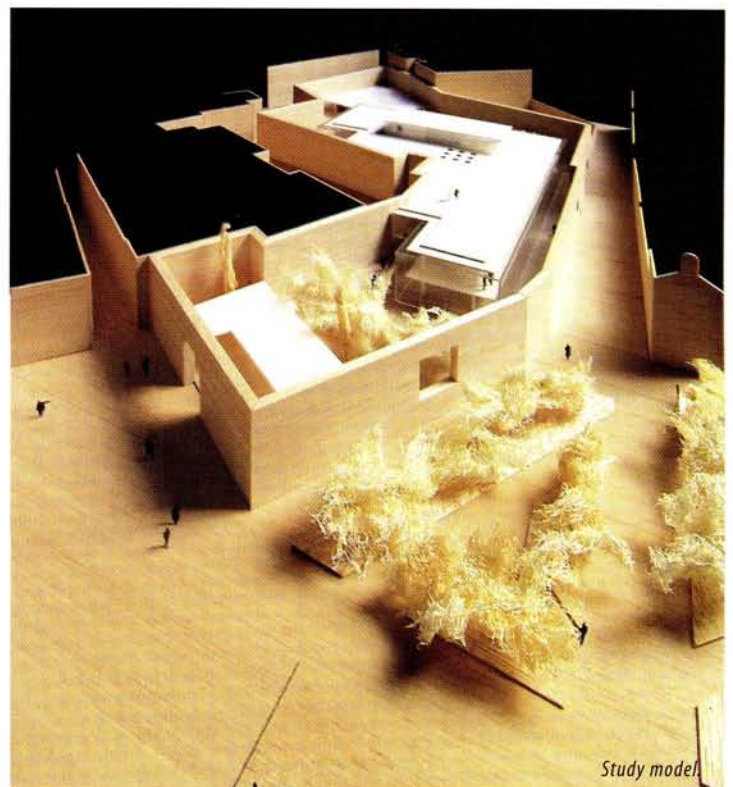


Study models showing the built space within its stone envelope.

Models depict the developing conceptual space of the office building.



Aerial view of the building under construction.



Study model

The architecture of Alberto Campo Baeza develops from an art of elimination; elimination of everything sans essential.

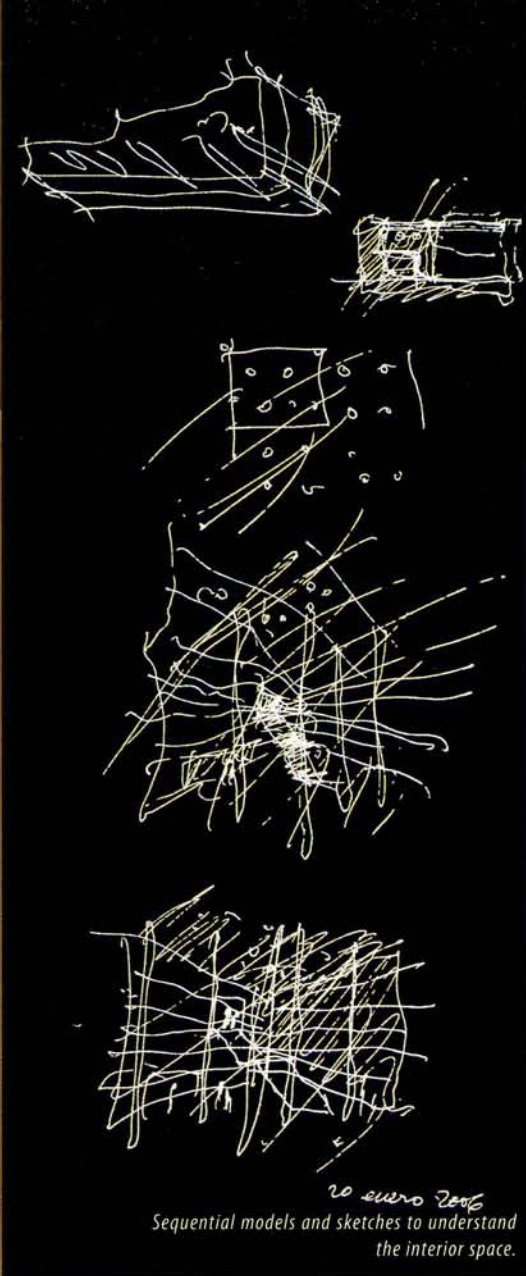


A small model to study the interior spaces.

The stillness and order of elements and formal articulations of precise details come together in a perfect balance of rigour and control.

precise articulations of elements of space. Calculated openings in the external wall frame views of the surrounding landscape and built fabric. The intuitive process of scaling the external envelope to the height of the built form within ensures a sudden and complete change in private levels from the street. The huge punctures in the wall ensure a discrete connection to the outside.

Physical models and sketch-studies show a very simple and direct process of thought. A tireless effort is seen towards achieving a visual balance between a free glass facade and slender vertical concrete columns. A rigid austerity exists in the way of placing staircases, openings and elements of form within the envelope of the external stone wall. The thickness of the external wall is a direct representation of the walls of historic structures of Spain. Qualitatively, the envelope derives from the context and blends within its surroundings. The radical nature of the crystal box within is perceived only once you cross the threshold. Studies and sketches by Campo Baeza also establish a great constraint and elimination of the un-essential to retain only those elements that are fundamental to structure and architecture of the office building. This process of stripping down to the bare minimum reveals architecture that is "essential" and crucial to functional clarity and expression.





Solid stone in contrast with the fluid glass.



Starkly opposite elements in perfect harmony – the architecture of Campo Baeza.



Sky, as contained within the stone walls.



Punctures for skylight with a slender concrete column.

There is a lot of silence attributed to architecture of Campo Baeza. The stillness and order of elements and formal articulations of precise details come together in a perfect balance of rigour and control. Space is defined by self-possessed gestures and controlled by austere material and light qualities. The gradients of privacy are very subtle but clear. Although the built form demonstrates a sense of control and clarity, the play of light on and within the built form creates an element of surprise and renders animation to the interior space. The sense of time is achieved as every minor change in the atmosphere outside, permeates through the double-layered facade within the building. Through a series of orchestrated experiences and subtle definitions of hierarchies, the Junta De Castilla building stands in complete stillness at a point where architecture meets poetry. ■

FACT FILE:

Project	:	Junta De Castilla Y Leon Office Building
Location	:	Zamora, Spain
Architect	:	Alberto Campo Baeza; Estudio Campo Baeza
Client	:	Junta De Castilla



View of the Zamora Cathedral from the top level of the building.